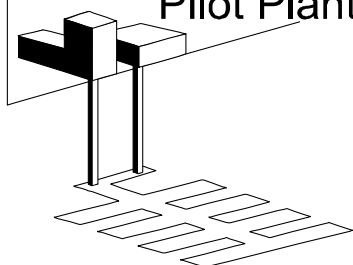


Waste Isolation Pilot Plant



Fact Sheet



DOE Proposes Modification To Hazardous Waste Facility Permit

Container Management Improvements

Background The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has proposed a modification to its Hazardous Waste Facility Permit (HWFP) for the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) to support DOE efforts to clean up the nation's defense transuranic waste by improvements in waste container management.

Transuranic waste is shipped to WIPP in Department of Transportation (DOT) "Type B" packages certified by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Once these packages arrive at the WIPP facility, they are off-loaded from the trailer and taken into the Waste Handling Building (WHB). Once inside the WHB, the waste containers are removed from the transportation package and placed in a designated above-ground storage area, awaiting permanent disposal in the underground. Currently, WIPP is limited on the number of waste containers that can be staged above-ground and the type of waste containers it can receive for disposal at the facility.

What is Proposed? DOE submitted this Class 3 permit modification request to the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) on January 8, 2004. The proposed modification seeks the following permit changes:

- Increase the permit limitations on storage capacity to the actual design capacity limits;
- Designate an area of the WHB for the unloading of horizontally loaded contact handled packages;
- Allow the use of waste containers meeting the DOT "Type A" or equivalent requirements;
- Allow for expanded use of NRC approved DOT "Type B" packages for storage in the parking area unit (PAU) behind the WHB;
- Expand the PAU to include the rail spurs currently located in back (south) of the WHB; and

- Provide information to support the option of receiving waste shipments via rail.

This permit change does not alter the ability of the WIPP facility to safely and effectively manage and permanently dispose of TRU waste. It simply improves its ability to accept and manage a variety of waste containers.

Comments

Comments for the record must be sent to Mr. Steve Zappe, New Mexico Environment Department, 2905 Rodeo Park Drive, Building 1, Santa Fe, NM 87505. They also may be e-mailed to steve_zappe@nmenv.state.nm.us or faxed to 505-428-2567. Only written comments will be accepted and must be received no later than 5 p.m. (MDT) on March 12, 2004. A copy of the permit modification may be viewed or copied at the NMED offices of Mr. Zappe. To be placed on the WIPP mailing list, contact Mr. Zappe at the address above.

For more Information

For more information about transuranic waste shipments and procedures, call the WIPP Information Center at 1-800-336-WIPP (9477), or visit the WIPP home page at <http://www.wipp.ws>. Comments to the Permittees regarding this permit modification may be sent to Mr. Bobby St. John, Washington TRU Solutions LLC, P.O. Box 2078, Carlsbad, NM 88221.